THE NINTH DAY.

27th February 1918.

The Assembly met at 11-45 A. M. on Wednesday, the 27th February 1918.

IX.—MISCELLANEOUS.—(*Continued*).

143. Desirability of allowing adequate representation to the various communities in the Public Service.

Mr. P. Jacob Kurian (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) said Travancore had no serious politics, except the public service, to discuss. There were two divisions, *viz.* the privileged class of 8 lakhs of people, and the disabled class of 26 lakhs composed of Ezhavas, Muslims, Christians, &c., who were not allowed any share in the Revenue branch of the State service. The three reasons urged were (1) that this was a Hindu State and the Government a Hindu Government, (2) that the State was dedicated to Sri Padmanabhaswamy and (3) that the Devaswoms were incorporated with the Revenue Department. In regard to the first argument, the Member submitted that the major portion of the population was non-Hindu. As His Highness the Maha Raja was the Sovereign of all his subjects, the argument that the State was a Hindu State would not hold. The second reason could not be accepted, because the Ezhavas, who were also Hindus, were placed on the same footing as the non-Hindus in respect of admission into the Revenue Department. Further, when the State was dedicated to Sri Padmanabhaswamy, there was also a Christian population in the State. Thus, no invidious distinction would ever have been intended to be shown in respect of Christians or Mahomedans. With reference to the third argument, the Member said that Christians were employed in the Devaswom Department till 1036 M. E. There was no proclamation or rule prohibiting the admission of Christians. If the incorporation of Devaswoms with the Revenue Department was a stumbling block to the employment of the 26 lakhs of His Highness' subjects, the only course open was to separate the Revenue from the Devaswom Department. The Member also submitted that the establishment of a common test for appointments would bring contentment, peace and prosperity to all His Highness' subjects.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

144. Suggestions for the further development of representative institutions.

Mr. P. V. Verghese B. A., L. T. (Member, Nominated) submitted that the Town Improvement Committees should have a wider scope of work so that the people might slowly and gradually be trained in the administration of their own affairs. They were now confined to looking after sanitation which was being done even before the Committees came into existence. Medical aid, road-making, &c., should be undertaken by the Committees. The Committees should also make provision for feeding and housing the helpless poor afflicted with contagious diseases. In fact, there should be one poor-house in every town.

In regard to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the principle of election should admit of communal representation. The qualifying minimum tax should be reduced from Rs. 50 in the case of Christians. The Members of the Assembly should have the power of passing resolutions after discussion of general subjects.

The Legislative Council should also be re-constituted on the following lines :—

(*a*) There should be an elected majority of Members.

(*b*) The Legislative Council should have full control of the finances of the state except certain specified heads, such as Devaswoms.

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